

Madam Chair or Mr. Chairman,

My name is Amy Martin, from New Britain. I belong to Manos Unidas/UACT, a faith based organization.

I stand in support of HB6616, an act Concerning Expansion of Husky Health Benefits to those up through age 26, regardless of immigration status. If we don't cover them now with Husky, their health conditions will worsen and we will all end up paying the price when they have to go to the emergency room. And the price will be a lot higher then.

I have an undocumented friend with glaucoma. She is the head of a CT construction company, all of whom are undocumented immigrants. Without health insurance, she cannot afford the treatment she needs and risks going blind.

I worked as a hospital social worker in the late nineties and early two thousands. One of my responsibilities was to help low income patients obtain "free bed funds" from the hospital to help them pay their bills. A substantial number of these patients were undocumented immigrants with no health insurance. By the time I left the hospital, the amount of financial help they gave to the undocumented had decreased substantially.

The undocumented do the jobs that no one else wants to do. They are our nannies, our nurse's aides, our construction workers, our agricultural workers, our maintenance workers. They do essential jobs and yet only receive low pay in return. They are also a large segment of CT consumers who support CT businesses.

CT's undocumented immigrants are valuable members of CT. They are some of the sweetest, most polite and hardest working people I have ever met. Most have had to come here to flee unbearable poverty or violence.

We humans are all connected. When one suffers, we all suffer.

We, in CT, are all connected. When a large number of undocumented residents suffer from lack of health insurance, all of CT suffers.

Keep CT healthy and strong. Build a better CT by passing HB6616. Looking forward, I ask the committee to work toward opening access to all immigrants regardless of age.

Thank you for your time,

Amy L. Martin

Social Worker

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